

## Uxbridge police to rail trespassers: Go someplace else

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UXBRIDGE — Trains pass through Uxbridge hauling various freight and bulk items along the Providence and Worcester Railroad, but as the train passed through one night this past week, it picked up an unexpected load of human waste in an incident that has left railroad employees and law enforcement officials slack-jawed and speechless.

P & W Railroad employees called the Uxbridge Police Department about 10 p.m. Monday to report that four individuals on the railroad bridge on Route 122 had dropped their drawers and defecated on the train as it passed below.

Officers responded to the scene, but found no one in the area.

“I don’t have any words for it. It’s disgusting,” said Police Chief Jeffrey A. Lourie. “It’s a violation of the law. Their actions pose no lawful purpose.”

If found, those who unloaded the fecal freight could face a number of charges, among them disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, and open and gross lewdness.

“Obviously, it is very inappropriate behavior in a public place,” Chief Lourie said.

Charles Rennick, general counsel for P & W, said while it is not a common problem, this has happened before in the same location.

“It’s disgusting. It’s not just gross, but it creates a health and safety issue for our employees,” Mr. Rennick said, adding that the railroad does incur a cost to clean the train, which requires more than soap and hot water. “It’s hard to wrap your mind around the fact that someone would do that.”

However, scat on the tracks is not the only concern local officers and railroad

officials have. A day later, two officers working a paid detail near the railroad tracks on Route 122 noticed several paint cans on the ground and fresh graffiti on a nearby bridge abutment. Looking closer, they also saw a can left on the railroad tracks that appeared to have been run over by a train.

“Something like that crushed can could have caused an issue,” Chief Lourie said.

According the Police Department’s Facebook page, a discarded spray paint canister can damage a train or cause a derailment.

“At times, the trains passing through carry hazardous materials, and if the train gets derailed it could cause a HUGE problem,” according to the message to residents. “Take this as a warning: If you are caught on the railroad tracks, you will be arrested for trespassing. If you are caught ‘tagging’ ANY property you will be arrested. If we catch you with your pants down defecating on the train you will be charged with everything we can find that fits the elements to the crime.”

As for the graffiti, it seems to be meaningless, but in other areas — even areas as close as Worcester — so-called “tagging” might be sending a message.

“It’s not artwork; it’s vandalism. . . I am assuming it is just vandalism,” the chief said.

Chief Lourie and his officers said this serves as a reminder that it is illegal to be on train tracks and that residents seeing anyone on local train tracks should call police.

“There are reasons why there are “No Trespassing” signs posted. We don’t want to see anyone struck by a train. When we see something or have a report of something suspicious, we will respond,” Chief Lourie said. “At the very least, we want to deter this type of behavior.”

Mr. Rennick added that defacing railroad property is a federal offense, trespassing on railroad property is a criminal offense, and leaving items on the track creates a risk not only to the train, but to the railroad employees working on railroad property.

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